

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9-11, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kunishi et al. (US 5,306,168). Claims 4, 8, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kunishi in view of Yokayama et al. (US 6,347,950). The examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). It is submitted that Kunishi fails to teach each and every element as set forth in claims 1, 6, and 10 for at least the reasons described below.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*, "wherein the contact portions are movable at the second stoppers relative to the fixing portion, and wherein the second stoppers come into contact with the fixing portion when the fixing portion is moved in a direction away from the opposing connector thereby stopping said protruding portion when the connector is removed from the opposing connector". In contrast, Kunishi merely discloses a floating type electrical connector having a housing 4 comprising an inner movable housing portion 9 connected to an outer stationary housing portion 10 by resilient joint pieces 11, and a plurality of female terminals 5 disposed within the housing 4. The female terminals 5 comprise a base section 19 having laterally extending arms 31, 32, with projections 24 extending from the laterally extending

arms 31, 32. The examiner asserted that the base arm 31 anticipates the feature "second stoppers". However, in Kunishi, "the opposite base arms 31 and 32 are fitted in the opposite recesses 33 and 34 of the stationary housing 10, and at the same time, the opposite projections 24 of the base section 19 are fitted in the opposite longitudinal holes 35" (see col. 4, lines 35 - 39, and Fig. 6). The projections 24 which extend from the laterally extending arms 31, 32 "skive into the stationary housing portion 10 at holes 35" (see col. 4, lines 1-2 and Fig. 6). As such, since the projections 24 are embedded and locked to the stationary housing portion 10, the base arms 31 and 32 are not movable relative to the stationary housing portion 10.

There is no teaching in Kunishi that the laterally extending arms 31, 32 (or any other disclosed features) are movable relative to the housing portion 10 and come into contact with the housing portion 10 thereby stopping the movable portion of the housing 4 when the connector is removed from the opposing connector as claimed in amended claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the art of record and should be allowed.

Though dependent claims 3-5 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 1. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

Claim 6 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*, "wherein said contact portions comprise second stoppers adapted to move toward the fixing portion and come into contact with the

fixing portion when the fixing portion is moved in a direction away from the opposing connector thereby stopping said protruding portion when the connector is removed from the opposing connector". Similar to the arguments above with respect to claim 1, the opposite base arms 31 and 32 in Kunishi are fitted in the opposite recesses 33 and 34 of the stationary housing 10 (with the projections 24 embedded and locked to the stationary housing portion 10). Therefore, the base arms 31 and 32 are not adapted to move toward the stationary housing portion 10 when the connector is removed from the opposing connector. Accordingly, claim 6 is patentable over the art of record and should be allowed.

Though dependent claims 7-9 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 6. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

Claim 10 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*, "wherein the second stoppers are spaced from the fixing portion when the connector is inserted in the opposing connector, and wherein the second stoppers are adapted to contact with the fixing portion when the fixing portion is moved in a direction away from the opposing connector to stop the protruding portion when the connector is removed from the opposing connector". Similar to the arguments above with respect to claim 1, the opposite base arms 31 and 32 in Kunishi are fitted in the opposite recesses 33 and 34 of the stationary housing 10 (with the projections 24 embedded and locked to the stationary housing portion 10). Therefore, the base arms 31 and 32 are

not spaced from the stationary housing portion 10 during 'insertion' of the connector and adapted to contact the stationary housing portion 10 during 'removal' of the connector.

Additionally, the Examiner also indicated (page 6, second paragraph of the Office Action) that "the claim does not require the second stoppers to not contact the fixing portion when not moved in a direction away from the opposite connector". Accordingly, claim 10 has been amended to claim that "the second stoppers are spaced from the fixing portion". Claim 10 is patentable over the art of record and should be allowed.

Though dependent claims 11-13 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 10. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,





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10/30/2007

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